

A DECLARATION of the ARCH-BISHOP of Canterbury, and the BISHOPS in and near London, Testifying their Abhorrence of the present Rebellion ; With an Exhortation to the Clergy and People under their Care, to be Zealous in the Discharge of their Duties to His Majesty King GEORGE.



HEREAS an Unnatural Rebellion has been Raised against Our Lawful and Rightful Sovereign King **GEORGE** in several Parts of the Kingdom, and is still Threatned in more, We have thought it Incumbent upon Us, out of Our Duty to God, to Our King, to Our Country, and to Our Holy Religion, in this Publick Manner to Declare Our Abhorrence of it, and to Warn both the Clergy and People under Our Charge, of the great Obligations they lie under, upon all these Accounts, to shew a hearty and an open Zeal for the Government in this Conjuncture.

The Providence of God has indeed so Wonderfully appeared hitherto, both in timely Discovering the Treason, and in Disappointing Our Enemies of several Advantages they expected, that We have great Reason to trust in Him, that the Event will be to the Confusion of the Wicked Actors in this Rebellion ; But however in a Matter of this High Nature, wherein Our Duty and Our dearest Interests are so deeply Concerned, no Endeavours ought to be thought Superfluous, nor Zeal Unnecessary.

We are the more Concerned, that both the Clergy and People of Our Communion should shew themselves hearty Friends to the Government upon this Occasion, to Vindicate the Honour of the Church of *England*, because the chief Hopes of Our Enemies seem to arise from Discontents artificially raised among Us, and because some who have Valued themselves, and have been too much Valued by others, for a pretended Zeal for the Church, have Joyned with Papists in these Wicked Attempts ; which as they must ruin the Church if they Succeed, so they cannot well end without great Reproach to it, if the rest of Us do not Clearly and Heartily Declare Our Detestation of such Practices.

We are not surprised, that Papists should rise up against a Government which they wou'd never yet own, and Endeavour to set a Person upon the Throne, who will Establish their Religion, and Ruin Ours : (tho' Rebellion is but an ill Return for the Quiet They have enjoy'd) But that profess'd Members of the Church of *England* should Joyn with them in this, and out of Private Discontents, Attempt to set up a Person whom they have so often and so lately Abjured, is so vile and detestable a thing, as may justly make them Odious both to God and Man ; But at the same time to pretend a Zeal for the Church, that is, to joyn with Papists, to Set up a Popish Pretender, to Support the Church of *England*, is such an Imposition upon the common Sense of Mankind, that nothing even in Popery it self can be more absurd, and nothing but an Infatuation from God, justly inflicted for Our Sins, can suffer to pass upon the Nation.

How much Blood this may cost, or what Ruin it may bring on Our Country, God only knows ; But We think proper to observe to you, that the more clearly and openly We Declare Our selves for the Government, the less it will probably be : And that all those must have a Share in the Guilt of the Innocent Blood that shall be spilt, not only who actually Joyn in the Rebellion, but who do any way Promote it ; or even by their Silence at this Juncture, shall give Hopes to the Pretender and his Friends, and just Cause of Jealousie and Suspition to the Government.

And is this a Time to stand Neuters when all lies at Stake ? Or is Popery become so Innocent of late, that it is Indifferent whether a Popish or a Protestant Prince be on the Throne ? This We speak to those who have Owned the Kings Title, and have Sworn to Maintain it, and are ready to do it again, as occasion offers ; who, We have reason to believe, are so many, that if They are true to their Oaths, the Government (humanly Speaking) cannot be in any Danger. And is it not fit for all such Persons to consider seriously what those Oaths are, with which they have bound their Souls ? They have not only Abjured the Pretender, and his Title ; but have Sworn to Defend King **GEORGE** to the utmost of their Power, against all Traiterous Conspiracies and Attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against his Person, Crown, or Dignity ; and to the utmost of their Power to Maintain and Defend the Succession of the Crown against the said Pretender, and all other Persons whatsoever.

These Words do not only import, that We will not Rebel against the King ; But that we will be active for Him according to Our several Stations, especially in Times of Danger, when Rebellions are raised against Him : They who are called to be Soldiers, by Fighting Courageously for Him ; They who are Magistrates, by Using their Authority for His Support ; They who are Ministers, by their Prayers, by their Preaching, and by their Admonishing those under their Care, of their Duty to Him ; and all of Us, by a Cheerful Ready Declaration of Our Resolution to Stand by Him.

Such a Conduct would Discourage the Rebels, and Animate the Government, would put an end to Our Troubles, and Support His Majesty in the Just Possession of the Crown, which was Settled upon His Family with very Mature Consideration, and for Just and Weighty Reasons, as being the next Family of the Royal Blood that were Protestants ; from whom only We could expect Protection in Our Religious and Civil Liberties, which are the Birthright of the People of *England*, and which no Man has a Right to Invade.

This Settlement was Established by the whole Legislature, and Confirmed by many Acts of Parliament, made in Two different Reigns, and under the Prevalency of each of the Unhappy Divisions of Parties among Us ; several of them, in the last Years of Our late Gracious Queen, and has been, from time to time, Sworn to by almost all, of all Orders and Degrees of Men among Us.

As this Settlement was made for the Security and Benefit of these Kingdoms, so have We all the Reason in the World to think Our selves Happy in that Person, who, by all this Authority, at present Reigns over Us. Even His Enemies are forced to Confess, that he is a very Good and Gracious Prince : He lives in the Constant Communion of the Church of *England*, and has given Us both His Oath, and His repeated Royal Word to Protect it ; and He has not, by any Thing He has done, given Us the least Reason to Suspect, but that it will Flourish at least, as much under His Government, as under that of the Best of His Royal Predecessors.

But if the Pretender should prevail, what can the Church of *England* expect, but Ruin and Destruction ? A Popish Prince upon the Throne, Bigotted to his Religion, and Heated with what will then be called Ill Usage,

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Usage, together with a long Train of Papists in the Succession, can bode nothing, but Faral and Irrecoverable Ruin to it. May not We in this Matter Appeal to the Experience of all Countries, whether a Succession of Popish Princes have not Ruined the Protestant Religion where-ever it has been Planted. They are obliged by the Laws of their Church, to Extirpate out of their Dominions what they call Heresy, which their Canonists treat as a Crime more Heinous than either Murder or Rebellion. And these Laws They never fail to put in Execution when they have full Power to do it ; as We may be Satisfied from what was done in Flanders, where, according to the Account of Writers of that Communion, above Fifty Thousand were put to the most miserable Deaths.

To pass over the Massacres and Horrible Persecutions in France, Savoy, and other Foreign Countries, Let us call to mind how much this Church and Nation suffered in the Bloody, tho' Short Reign of Queen Mar., contrary to Solemn Promises ; when not only many were put to Death, as Hereticks Convict, but the Torture was Ordered for all whom They Suspected, and who wou'd not Confess, according to the Barbarity of the Inquisition ; which Horrid Court, or something very like it, wou'd Probably have been Set up in this Kingdom, had that Popish Reign lasted but a little longer : And We have reason to fear it wou'd Effectually be Established here, if ever God, for Our Sins, shou'd suffer another Popish Prince to be Settled on this Throne.

The Progress that was made toward the Bringing this Yoke of Bondage upon Us, and the Miseries with which we were Threatned under the late Unhappy King James, are too fresh in Our Thoughts to be forgotten : And what befel that Unfortunate Prince, will certainly be Remembred and Resented by him who claims an Indefeasable Right to his Kingdoms.

But besides this, How must the Pretender look upon the Clergy of the Church of England, after all that They have been doing for near Thirty Years together ? They were the Clergy, that in the time of King James, did justly alarm the Nation with the Dangers of Popery ; from whence followed all that was done at the Revolution. And the Clergy have every Year since that, upon the Fifth of November, given God Thanks for what was then done, *for making all Opposition fall before Him* (the Prince of Orange) till He became Our King. They have not only taken all the Oaths Established by Law, but have used the Daily Prayers, and those of the several Fastings and Thanksgivings, for the Prosperity of the Government. They have frequently, from time to time, in their Addresses from the Convocation, and from their respective Dioceses, promised to Stand by the Protestant Succession. How must the Pretender look upon Persons, that have done all this ? That have Prayed against Him, that have Addressed against Him, that have Sworn against Him, and Abjured Him for so many Years together ?

What a Reproach will this Matter then be to the Church of England ? Such of Us as stand true to Our Oaths, will then be called Rebels and Traitors ; and such as do not (if any shall be so wicked) will be called Atheists and Infidels for taking Abominable Oaths against their Consciences. What Scandal will this give to Our People ? and how will they be apt to turn Papists in great Numbers, when We, that should direct and stand by them, shall fall under such Reproaches ? But We hope better, tho' We thus Speak ; and that God will not suffer these sore Judgments to come upon Us, and Our Country.

We do therefore, in the Name of God, call upon all those who are under Our Care, in the first place to humble themselves before God, for the great and crying Sins of the Nation ; for that Spirit of Infidelity and Libertinism ; of Unthankfulness for the Mercies of the Gospel ; of Formality and Hypocrisie ; of Strife and Envy, of Hatred and Animosity, which are so rife among Us : And which are generally the Forerunners of the Destruction of any People. Let Us all cry mightily to God, to avert these Judgments, which We have so justly deserved ; that He would Save his People, so often and so wonderfully preserved by Him, *and not give His Heritage to Reproach* ; that He would not suffer this Church to be Overrun with Superstition and Idolatry, or leave Us to the Mercies of them, *whose Mercies are cruel*. Let Us particularly Pray for the Preservation of the Person and Government of Our most Gracious Sovereign King GEORGE, that God would Cover His Enemies with Shame ; *but that upon Himself and His Posterity, the Crown may ever Flourish*. We do also Charge both Clergy and People, as they will be Answerable for the Destruction, that may otherwise come, both upon the Church and Nation ; that They endeavour to Strengthen the Hands of the Government in this Dangerous Conjuncture : the Clergy by plainly Admonishing their Flocks of their Duty, both to their King and Country ; and the People by a Cheerful Declaration of their Readiness to Stand by the Government. And let all of Us, forgetting all Differences, and Animosities, make this the great Contention, who shall act with the truest Zeal against the Common Enemy.

And God grant, that We may all, in this Our Day, see the Things that belong to Our Peace, before they are hid from Our Eyes.

Novemb. 3.
1715.

THO. CANTUAR.
Joh. London.
Jonathan Winchester.
Jo. Lichfield & Cov.
Ric. Peterborough.
W. Sarum.
Jo. Bangor.
W. Lincoln.
C. Norwich.
W. Ely.
Tho. Chichester.
Rich. Gloucester.
John Asaph.
Jo. Oxon.

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